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17. ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS) Procedures to help the teacher of disadvantaged children reconstitute the models of learners and classrooms to which she is accustomed are presented. These procedures also help to eliminate the educational retardation of disadvantaged children.

Seven procedures were discussed. "Contact with the cultural mainstream." On the assumption that school experiences would lack meaning if not tied in with the cultural mainstream, schools focused on compensatory cultural experiences through visits and field trips. The evidence does not support carryover from cultural exposure to improved academic achievement. "Motivational approaches." Examples are given of massive community action, attempts to reach students through their existing strengths rather than emphasizing a single right answer, and the use of materials which derive from and deal with the real life of the learners. "Compensating for cognitive deficiencies." Learning environments are created that compensate for the child's restricted environment. "Language development." "Enhancing the self-concept." Schools should explore channels through which disadvantaged children can learn to appreciate themselves. "Reading." Several new approaches described are the Frostig Program, the Accelerated Progressive Choice Reading Method, the Structural Reading Series, and the Initial Teaching Alphabet. "Individual instruction that will accommodate many ability levels in one classroom." A prepared environment would be created for each grade level and for each subject area. Pupils could use their own pace-graded, self-teaching materials that cover a wide range in both skill and content levels.

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METHODS AND MATERIALS

FOR EDUCATIONALLY DISADVANTAGED YOUTH.

by

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METHODS AND MATERIALS

FOR EDUCATIONALLY DISADVANTAGED YOUTH.

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It has become fashionable today to be concerned with educational problems of so-called disadvantaged children. In three or four short years concern in this area has spread from the sad and lonely lament of the classroom teacher confronted with a group of children whom she couldn't teach to a nation-wide movement. The educational band wagon is once again on the move. Perhaps, as educators, we should be gratified at the widespread interest in the learning problems of a segment of our school population long neglected. But, with the gratification comes the memory of other educational band wagons, gathering momentum as they rolled across the nation only to slow and come to a halt long before significant or durable changes had occurred. And only a few stalwart souls, here and there, remain to keep the memory alive. And while the band wagon, with all its fanfare, its glamour, is on the move, we have a sense of urgency to <u>do</u> something - bring the "activity program" into the elementary school, focus our attention on the pupils' life adjustment, organize buzz groups and run class discussion by the latest tenets of group dynamics, create special classes for the gifted, install closed circuit television for large group instruction or look to teaching machines as the great panacea for individualization of teaching - each in its time has captured the educational imagination. But, too often, what is done in haste, spurred by the fifes and drums, or the immediately available funds, is but a shell of the intent, based on too little knowledge and rarely integrated in lasting fashion into the educational fabric.

The urgency to do something, although often strengthened by pressures outside the educational enterprise, may also reflect the educators' unconscious recognition that there's little time, that soon another fad will become visible over the educational horizon and rolling before it, flags flying and trumpets blaring, will be a new band wagon, beckoning to all to come aboard.

Although it looks much like fads of the past, the problem which has captured a large portion of educational concern today, especially in the large urban centers differs in urgency and intensity from some of its predecessors.

First, because a large proportion of disadvantaged learners are Negro, their educational plight is intimately tied to a growing activist social movement for racial equality for which the schools have become a primary focus, pressed into taking action and forced to reconsider some of their cherished commitments.

Second, and closely related to the first is the growing awareness of the relationship between poverty and school failure and the recognition that the inadequately educated represent an increasing financial burden to the community. Concern for the drop-out is in greatest part a reflection of the economic problems inherent in supporting large number of minimally literate people. It becomes an economic necessity for the school to keep these youngsters off the labor market which has no room for them, and by keeping them in school longer, hopefully teach them more. Third, the problem is not limited to ghettos in large cities but is spreading throughout metropolitan areas and even beyond. As the push for school integration increases in momentum, it becomes more difficult for even the most imaginative to pretend they aren't there. As one teacher put it, "You can ignore one or two children in a class who aren't learning, but you can't sweep six or more under the rug, they bulge too much."

The problem will increase in intensity rather than diminish. It will not be possible to ignore it. The economy will have increasingly less "room at the

bottom" and the minimally literate will have no alternative but to swell the ranks of the permanently unemployed, the unemployable, with all the concomitant "social dynamite" implied by such a state. In 1963, the "proportion of youth, age 16-25 who were out of school and out of work -- was greater than it was in the depths of the depression."(19) The contradiction of a society which has severe man power shortages at the higher levels and an ever increasing army of unemployed, must find some sort of resolution, a part of which, at least lies within the purview of the schools.

In its concern for the education of the so called disadvantaged, the school has been caught up in ever intensifying social problems which, as an institution, it cannot sidestep or ignore, but which, at the same time, by itself, it cannot solve. It becomes clearer than ever that the school must examine with great care what it can do, where it can place its unique competencies so as to make an optimum contribution to the solution of the broader questions and then, concentrate its efforts on the thoughtful and careful development of the procedures by which its competencies can be effectively employed. It is too easy to succumb to pressures to do something by proceeding in haste and out of expediency; proliferating programs and services derived from environments quite different from those for which they are intended. We see all around us examples of school systems, on their own initiative or in collaboration with some nationally or locally funded agency engaging in a variety of activities for which there is little empirical basis and often a lack of theoretical underpinning. Dozens of school systems have proposed plans and are going ahead with the opening of pre-kindergarten classes. For example, New York City is opening 66 such classes this fall. (20p.31)

but very few have any organized or defensible program of what is going to happen in these pre-school classes. A great variety of approaches to reading is now available and school after school is fastening onto one particular reading scheme as against another. Again, there is little basis in empirical fact or theory for their selection. Perhaps most obtrusive are the proliferated guidance services and other kinds of consultative services which have been poured into schools in disadvantaged areas. The only support for these is the assumption of their past effectiveness in helping middle class youngsters who have learning problems or school behavior problems. There is little evidence to support the proliferation of such programs and services as a means of raising the learning level of disadvantaged pupils.

To arrive at meaningful educational programs in any context takes 4 basic steps: 1) An exploration of the content to be taught and the sociological, psychological, and school factors which underly the learning processes and patterns with which one is concerned. 2) To develop revised or original ideas based upon the wisdom gleaned from these analyses. 3) To test these ideas as rigorously and as open mindedly as is possible in various school situations, and 4) To put into classroom use the procedures found to be most effective. This approach requires time and cooperative effort among subject matter specialists, social scientists, educational researchers and school people. Not all of these tasks can be done at once; they have a sequence built into them.

At present, there is a rich research literature on the characteristics of the lower class learner and his social and psychological environment. We are also confronted with a wide range of ideas for methods and materials through which to bring teaching into relation with what we know about the learner. What is needed now is serious attention to Step 3 in the sequence - the rigorous testing of the proposed procedures. But because of the tremendous pressure to <u>do something</u> schools are moving directly to the fourth step - implementation - without any

valid information on which to base choices and decisions. In too few instances have school systems or social agencies built sound research and evaluation procedures into their multiple-attack projects. They have, in most cases, adopted a "saturation approach," throwing everything into the hopper in the hope that something will work, often without a clearly defined theoretical basis for the selection of program components. There is grave danger that in a short time, as the outside funding for these massive programs runs out, schools will become disenchanted with their efforts and slip back into inaction, lacking empirical guidelines for selecting and retaining those procedures which really make a difference. At this time, the only alternative to sticking a hand into a grab-bag of methods and materials and using whatever one draws is the establishment of theoretical criteria for selection. But this must be done with the realization that, in the final accounting, the test of any approach is its effect on pupil learning in the classroom.

A cursory review of several theoretical formulations which attempt to explain the academic retardation of disadvantaged youngsters will provide the framework for considering educational methods and materials. These formulations often differ markedly in theoretical emphasis or in the interpretation of empirical data, and, therefore, imply greater or lesser school emphases on particular teaching strategies and materials. Disparate as these theories or interpretations may be, most of them generate testable hypotheses regarding school practice. However, some propositions produce little thrust for developing new approaches while others are rich in potential educational ideas. In general, the educational procedures derived from the several theories are more often complementary than contradictory.

Theories which account for the Educational Retardation of Disadvantaged Pupils.

One formulation has it that the lower class or disadvantaged youngster fails to live up to school expectations, doesn't learn because he isn't taught. This is sometimes referred to as the "self-fulfilling prophecy" theory of non-learning. When they enter school these children are already expected to be inadequate learners because, in the past, such pupils have been poor achievers. Furthermore, as soon as they are tested, their low scores on tests of aptitude and achievement reinforce the conviction that they lack the ability to learn. As a result, society as a whole and the school which represents it expect too little from them. Since they believe that the pupils lack the ability to learn, the teachers give up in their attempt to teach. Since little is expected of them, less money is spent on educating them. Their school plants are the oldest and most dilapidated, the instructional materials foreign to their experience, and their teachers are generally less well qualified and less experienced (and therefore less costly than are teachers in predominantly middle-class schools). This is the point of view so eloquently expressed by Patricia Sexton (25) in her book Education and Income. Kenneth Clark, (3) reinforces this position:

> A normal child who is expected to learn, who is taught, and who is required to learn, will learn. His experiences of success will generally increase his self-respect, enhance his sense of his own worth ... A single standard of academic expectation, a demanding syllabus and skillful, understanding teaching are essential to the raising of the self-esteem of disadvantaged children, increasing their motivation for academic achievement and providing our society with the benefit of their intellectual potential.

Such a formulation places the entire blame for the educational problems of disadvantaged youth squarely on the school and the classroom teacher. There is little in this formulation which is sympathetic to the teacher's plight or recognizes the difficulties the teacher faces when he does try to teach. Here the assumption is that the unwillingness to teach, the lack of faith, the disrespect

of the teacher and the entire school enterprise for the disadvantaged learner are at the root of his failure. The child senses these attitudes, internalizes these expectations and fulfills the prophecy of failure.

Other explanations, unlike the one above, suggest that the observed attitudes and behavior of administrators and teachers, even when descriptively accurate, are at least in part, the result of professional frustration, which derives from the dysharmony between the school's expectations and the expectations of the lower-class home and neighborhood; the disparity between the child's learning readiness and what the teacher expects the readiness of a "normal" child to be.

These dysharmonies derive from a variety of sociological and psychological factors characteristic of the two cultures which confront each other in the school: lower class children and particularly the severely disadvantaged come to school with few experiences which produce readiness for academic learning either intellectually or attitudinally.

Because of the constricted world which is theirs...many of the children have never been more than a block or two away from their neighborhood -- they are unable to cope with the broad acculturation purposes of the school, and are unaware of and therefore unmotivated by the opportunities afforded by the larger world. Deutsch (5p3)suggests that "... the more constricted an individual's social frame of reference and the greater its distance from the cultural mainstream, the less meaningful and the less effective are the dominant cultural values which impinge on him in the schools and the other social institutions."

A further disparity derives from the differential reward systems in the two cultures - the home and neighborhood rewarding physical prowess, physical aggression in response to frustration and physical work well done; the school rewarding conceptual behavior, verbal responses to frustration and intellectual tasks well done.

There are also great differences in the time orientations on which behavior is based in the two situations. The lower class individual is oriented to the present, sees little purpose in husbanding time or money, or postponing present gratification for some promise of greater reward in the future and operates on the philosophy of "a bird in hand." The school, on the other hand, takes on meaning when it is seen as a preparation, as a means toward a future end which has relevance to the goals of the learner.

But from some points of view the motivational and attitudinal disparities, though powerful factors in the academic dysfunction of many lower class children, do not provide a sufficient explanation. One must also consider the disadvantaged child's limited exposure to perceptual, conceptual, and verbal experiences in the early formative years which, in the normal middle class environment, prepare the child for the tasks which the school will set him. In discussing these cognitive deficiencies, Ausabel states: (1p.2-3)

> It is reasonable to assume that whatever the individual's genic potentialities are, cognitive development occurs largely in response to a variable range of stimulation ... Characteristic of the culturally deprived environment, however, is a restricted range and a less adequate and systematic ordering of stimulation sequences. The effect of this restricted environment includes poor perceptual discrimination skills; inability to use adults as sources of information, correction and reality testing as instruments of satisfying curiosity; an impoverished language system and a paucity of information concepts and relational propositions.
>
> His abstract vocabulary is deficient and his language related knowledge, such as number concepts, self-identity information, and understanding of the physical and geometrical and geographical environments is extremely limited.'

This is not to say that lower class children are non-verbal, or to ignore the rich and expressive nature of their communication with peers: it is rather to recognize that they communicate in what Bernstein calls a "restrictive code," (2) lacking the "formal" language through which to develop relational propositions,

formulate generalizations or think in terms of tentative, hypothetical constructs. As a consequence of early language retardation, the disadvantaged child makes a slower and less complete transition from concrete to abstract modes of thought. These deficiencies become ever greater impediments to adequate academic functioning as the school work requires increasing abstraction and generalization.

Problems Confronting the Teacher

Certainly, no one formulation of the reasons for academic retardation among disadvantaged youth can account for the total problem. There is little doubt that many classroom teachers do not teach effectively. Some years ago, it was not unusual to walk into a junior high school classroom in a slum area school and find the board covered with endless written material, the children sitting passively and copying. The release from this meaningless, non-learning task came only with the bell. Such procedures reflected the school's tendency to reward the teacher for his ability to keep the class quiet, rather than for his effectiveness in raising the academic achievement of the pupils. There is little doubt that many teachers have abdicated their instructional responsibilities, or if not abdicated, restricted them to a minimum. There is evidence that in some slum schools, and particularly in the most disadvantaged areas, teachers spend far less than 50% of their class time teaching. The bulk of their time is spent on discipline maintenance, performance of routines, and other activities which keep the class quiet but provide no instruction. There still are, of course, teachers who look at their pupils' low IQ and feel justified in their prophecy that, despite all of their efforts, the children will not learn. But these teachers, I believe, are in a minority. Most teachers come into school, especially in the early grades, hopeful of their ability to intervene in the academic lives of their children. But, their willingness, enthusiasm, and initial interest are defeated

by the fact that all they know how to do, all their best intentions seem ineffectual. And for this, teachers are hardly to blame. Conditioned by their own environment as well as by their teacher education courses and student teaching experiences, they internalize a model of the learner created in their own image or in the image of the middle-class child. And their suburban-like model of the classroom presupposes; a business-like and orderly place where prepared and motivated children come to learn. How can teachers adapt themselves to a classroom in which the clientele and the situation are so totally different from the image they bring to it. All that they know how to do, their methods and materials, their expectations of the learner, their standards of achievement all derive from a model which is totally inappropriate to the reality they confront. Little wonder that many young teachers annually leave the difficult schools and in many instances leave the profession.

The teacher needs help, first, to reconstitute the model of learner and classroom; second, to find the means by which to reach and teach the child as he is. The research and theory from the social sciences provide more basis for carrying out the first than the second task. We have the data through which to bring the teacher to an understanding of the child's culture and those of its features which set it out of joint with the prevailing expectations of the school. Seminars, readings, contacts in the community, home visits and cooperation with local social agencies can bring the teacher to understand the real world from which the child comes and to recognize that his academic deficiences and behavioral problems reflect the disonances between what the school expects and what the child is motivationally or intellectually prepared to produce.

The second task is far more difficult. Teachers need more than an understanding of why the child is as he is; they need methods by which to intervene effectively, strategies for moving the child from his present status to higher

levels of achievement, materials through which to teach him. As noted earlier, there is little systematic knowledge of which procedures work, which strategies best achieve the desired goals. Despite this lack, however, schools are doing a great variety of things, publishers are developing new materials, and teachers, singly and through their professional associations are developing new practices or rethinking old ones. In the absence of valid criteria derived from experimental evidence, some other criteria have to be applied to the assessment of the myriad practices and the increasing flow of materials. Therefore, at least, pro tem, the potential adequacy of approaches must be judged on the degree to which they are based on sound learning and social-science theories and take account of what is known about the learning patterns and the social and intellectual characteristics and needs of the disadvantaged child.

Rather than present a catalogue of promising practices by grade level or content area, I shall attempt to organize description of methods and materials within some of the theoretical formulations referred to earlier. Like any other organization, this one fails to achieve pure categories, without overlap. Procedures intended, for example, to expand the child's world, may, if well-executed, develop some of his verbal and conceptual skills; while work directed at language development and modification may well result in enhanced motivation and an improved self-image. Determination of the particular rubric under which to place a given approach will be made on the basis of its primary intent.

The various procedures will be classified in thefollowing major categories:

1) Contact with the Cultural Mainstream,
2) Motivational Approaches,
3) Compensations for Cognitive Deficiencies,
4) Language Development,
5) Enhancing the Self-concept,
6) Reading,
7) Individualized Teaching.

Although reading is not a theoretical construct and the various developments in the field are often closely tied to the theoretical formulations discussed in the first five categories, reading is so central to the total school enterprise that it warrants special and separate consideration.

A brief discussion of procedures by which teachers can work simultaneously with pupils of varying readiness and speeds of learning is included here because of the increasing number of situations in which disadvantaged pupils are being placed in schools and classes with more advanced and more rapid learners. Therefore, teachers will have to plan diversified learning activities, suited to particular pupils which can go on at the same time in the classroom.

One further caveat is needed. It is quite obviously fruitless to consider methods and materials in the absence of content. They are inextricably bound together and the former takes on meaning only as it implements the latter. Furthermore, the determination of what is method and what is content, or to distinguish between content and the materials used to transmit it is an almost impossible task, especially in the education of young children. Therefore, this paper will probably stray from its assignment and find itself poaching on the territory of the previous paper.

Contact with the Cultural Mainstream

One of the earliest attempts to up-grade the education of disadvantaged children derived from the theory that as long as the child was cut-off from clear perceptions of what the broader world had to offer, or how the school ties in with the cultural mainstream, his school experiences would lack meaning and remain irrelevant to his goals. On the assumption that cultural impoverishment is a major factor in poor academic performance, schools focused on providing compensatory cultural enrichment experiences through exposure to the cultural

riches of the city. The Higher Horizons type programs in operation in several of the big cities in the United States exemplify this approach. Several such programs are described in the 1964 publication of the Research Council of the Great Cities Program for School Improvement (23) and in the 1963 report of a conference sponsored by the U. S. Office of Education on teaching educationally disadvantaged children and youth. (30) In some cities the emphasis has been on visits to museums, the theater, ballet, opera and concerts in order to enable the children to experience the joy and excitement of the cultural riches which can be available to them. In other situations, a greater emphasis was placed on trips to factories and offices, newspapers and department stores to acquaint pupils with the industrial and commercial potentials of their city. Or, as in Quincey, Illinois, (30) ------ places to visit were selected because one of the children's parents worked there or, as in larger cities, because there were Negroes or Puerto Ricans employed in important positions.

The intent of these programs generally goes beyond the visits themselves, enriching and broadening as these may be.* They have been used to provide content for in-school learning. Through discussions, dramatics, written work and various reconstructive projects pupils were given opportunities to place their own interpretations on what they saw, place themselves in relation to the experiences and arrive at more realistic interpretations of what awaits them and what they can become.

No one can object to this approach. But many find it superficial, at best. How can the child identify with the cultural riches to which he is exposed when they remain, in reality, external to him? How can a child living in a ghetto, going to a largely segregated school believe that the invitation to participate in the beautiful world outside is really for him? Knowing that his parents have been barred from entry, living in a community concerned with sheer survival, how can he take seriously the school's promise that if he succeeds in school he can

* The Higher Horizons programs generally include various guidance, remedial and

enter the mainstream? If a few Negroes and Puerto Ricans or Mexicans have made it, look at the millions who haven't! And, especially for the boy, there is some risk in showing interest or enjoyment in the arts or in cultural pursuits. This may be viewed as the mark of the sissy and find only derision in a culture which judges maleness by physical prowess and rejects all forms of intellectualism.

What the critics of the Higher Horizons approach question most, however, is the anticipated carry over from cultural exposure to improved academic achievement. To date, the evidence does not support such a transfer. Where they have been evaluated, achievement gains were found to be minimal and transitory. Besides, even if positive academic or social gains are found, it will be impossible to determine to what extent these are attributable to the broadening of horizons, the various other services which are invariably added in such programs or the Hawthorne Effect of the experimental situation. If, as seems to be the case for the majority of pupils, such programs do little to disrupt the cycle of "progressive retardation" then they must be vigorously supplemented by programs which effectively change the learning patterns of the pupils.

8. Motivational Approaches

The motivation of the child to learn comes from his total life experience From what little evidence we have, the young child eagerly comes to school, admonished by his parents to be "good." He has, at least on a verbal level, been sent off into a highly promising enterprise. But what negative concepts of the usefulness or meaningfulness of learning he may have internalized by the time he enters first grade is very difficult to assess. There are few tangible indications in the home that his parents view school learning as important. In many instances they are semi-literate and there is either a complete absence or a paucity of books in the house. Although he may be verbally admonished to be a good boy and a good learner, deep inside, especially if he is Negro, he may

already view himself as dumb, and view the school as minimally useful. At older levels, reinforced by many years of failure, caught up in a cycle of "progressive retardation," the motivation to achieve becomes weaker and weaker. The forces in the "mainstream" which are insistently demanding more highly trained people either do not penetrate into his world or he doesn't believe that he can make it. He has already decided that, like his father before him, he will be "relegated to innocuous desuetude" by his society. This is particularly true if he is a Negro. Reinforced by his own failures in school, his strong belief that there isn't any point in succeeding creates a block to any further instruction. How then can this child be helped to accept or act on the knowledge that the culture which lies beyond his immediate grasp will welcome him if he develops the academic and social skills needed to qualify for admission?

Massive Community Action.

The most direct approach to remotivating pupils in a Negro slum district of a large city is exemplified by the Banneker District (30) project in St. Louis. Children and their parents, together, were directly confronted with the facts of academic retardation. Parents were convinced that they had to help by providing encouragement, space and adequate conditions for the children to do their homework. The motto of the project for the parents was "Success in school is your child's most important business." For the children, it read "Success in school is my most important business." The school symbol was a "Mister Achiever" and his exploits were broadcast on the school radio. At the same time, teachers were instructed to ignore IQ scores and treat all children as if they had superior ability. Visits were made to places of work to give pupils a chance to see the relevance of school skills to real work and to build an image of the Negro at work. In addition, merchants in the district were involved in reporting truancy and urging children back to school.

The first three years of the project demonstrated significant academic gains for many pupils and increased the proportion of junior high school graduates admitted to Track I in the high school.

Creating a Success Context

A somewhat different motivational approach is exemplified by attempts to reach pupils through their existing strengths and interests and to provide learning tasks which do not call for a single "right answer." Based on the old generalization "Law of Effect," activities are planned in which pupils will have success, regardless of their academic status. As schools are recognizing that many lower-class pupils are more effective in motor than in conceptual tasks, that some have abilities and talents in music and in graphic representation and many respond far better through dramatic acting-out procedures than through written or even formal verbal ones, increased attention is being given to teaching strategies which capitalize on these abilities. In Buffalo (23p.9), for example, art and music teachers have been added to the staffs of some elementary schools. With such staff available, choral groups and bands can be organized, studio rooms, ceramics and art metal or woodworking shops can be outfitted and children can work in varied media. In some communities drama workshops have come into being which give youngsters an opportunity to participate in stage craft, costume making, puppetry, dancing and the selection and rehearsal of plays. Such programs can be carried on by the schools in cooperation with community agencies as in San Francisco (23 p.79-80) or as a part of the normal school curriculum as in a number of high schools in New York City.

Theoretically, such activities should help enhance the pupil's self-esteem by enabling him to view himself as a successful learner and by helping him gain status both with teachers and with his peers. It is hypothesized that once,

through a display of his talents, a success-context is created, the student will be more open to academic learning.

There are similar possibilities in making use of approaches which fall into the category of "divergent production". These have been too little explored. Many ideas intended for the enhancement of divergent thinking such as naming uses of objects, developing flexibility in categorization, guessing at the antecedents and consequences of situations can help the learner feel free to originate and elaborate in the assurance that all answers are acceptable. Such exercises can also enhance language development and concept formation. An interesting strategy along these lines was used by Deborah Elkins (8) in working with a junior high school group. She tape-recorded a story which the pupils listened to and followed in their books. Just before the end she turned off the recorder, asked the children to close their books and write how they thought the story would end. When finished they were able to compare the various endings produced by the class with the author's ending. All were right, if they grew out of the story.

However, close examination is needed to determine whether success experiences in areas where the learner can always be right will act as a motivating force in fields of learning where one must make the correct response such as in reading and arithmetic. In this connection programmed materials which allow for a minimum of potential error and provide immediate reinforcement may prove helpful. Further discussion of programmed instruction appears in the last section of this paper.

Hit Them Where They Live

The use of materials, existing or developed, which derive from and deal with the real life of the learners, may result in increased motivation to learn. Although bordering closely on content, such materials do fall within the purview of this paper. Two interesting instances of this technique are reported in Improving English Skills of Culturally Different Youth. (14) One, by Charles G. Spiegler (26) relates the techniques used in a vocational high school to interest students in reading. Recognition of special concerns of individual pupils led the teacher to suggest books dealing directly with such concerns and from there pupils went into broader and broader fields. A program seen on television was used as an impetus to reading the book on which it was based. Hearing Ogden Nash's verse read on Ed Sullivan's show led pupils to find the published works. A book fair, replete with books related to the concerns and interests of these boys stimulated the purchase of hundreds of volumes. Most of the books would probably not have qualified for a Great Books Course, but they all represented a gateway to reading and the enjoyment of the printed word.

Don Wolfe (32) in the same report, describes procedures for teaching writing through what he calls a "realistic program." Before pupils will learn to write, or even be willing to engage in such effort the teacher must "assume a responsibility for finding out the deep-running problems, fears and obstacles of each student and encourage him to express his feelings as freely as he can about each one." Without such an effort on the part of the teacher, "the student cannot find the natural level of his writing power nor make the first crucial step toward the mature answers to the questions that rack his brain and plague his sleepless hours." (p. 87). He stresses the importance of referring to the students writing as "autobiographical" rather than "creative," as autobiographical material of great depth and meaning is available to all.

At the primary level, the Language-Experience Readers recently published in an experimental edition by the Chandler Publishing Company (San Francisco) use photographs of real children engaged in real behavior and provide the city child with characters and situations with which he can identify and which derive from his experiences. Slides, Swings, Trucks and Cars, Bikes, Supermarket and The Zoo are the matter with which these books for city children deal. The booklets are sequential, carefully graded as to vocabulary and though the texts are still somewhat repetitive and a bit dull, they are a great improvement over "run Sally run, run, run, run."

The Bank Street College of Education (30p81)is also developing a reading series "using stories and illustrations to reflect back to the children the positive aspects of the variety of community and cultural settings which characterize American society."

For the junior high school, two series of materials have become available. The Turner-Livingston Series (28) includes six paperback books each dealing with problems real to many teenagers. The reading level is relatively low, the content engrossing. Each of the books tells a continuous story, * interrupted by various comprehension and vocabulary building exercises. The style is delightful and highly appropriate to the content. These books go to the heart of the young person's concerns and problems and have been found most attractive by poor readers at the junior high school level.

Even more recent is a series by the same author entitled When People Talk on the Telephone. (29) Here, too, real situations requiring telephone communication are depicted in language appropriate to the socially mature but backward reader. The vignettes are convincing; the participants, of all races and backgrounds; the content derived from the cultures of various sub-groups.

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* The series includes the following titles: The Town You Live In., The Family You Belong To., The Person You Are., The Jobs You Get., The Friends You Make., The Money You Spend.

Both these series are predicated on the theory that material derived from the lives of people close to the reader will provide a more enticing entry into the world of books and incidentally teach some significant social studies content as well. They can also be effectively used for the exploration of values and pupils' personal concerns.

That these books are interesting to many lower-class or disadvantaged learners is clear. But how effectively they raise comprehension and vocabulary levels or how effectively they stimulate further reading probably depends upon their use. This remains to be examined.

Compensating for Cognitive Deficiencies

The most recent theoretical addition to an understanding of the inadequate academic attainment of disadvantaged youth has come from explorations of the relationship between early environmental stimulation and later intellectual functioning.(13) Much of the evidence on the disruptive effects of stimulus deprivation comes from animal studies. But there are also indications from studies of human subjects that severe curtailment of stimulation during infancy results in various forms of institutional and cognitive retardation. The propositions of this theory have been briefly explored in the earlier portion of this paper. Translated into school practice, they lead, perforce, to the creation of a learning environment directed at compensating for the lacks which result from the child's constricted environment and to the need for *early*, structured intervention.

Since, when compared to young, middle-class children, the disadvantaged groups perform less well on sensory-motor, perceptual and conceptual tasks, pre-school programs have been organized to provide early teaching in these areas. Several of these are structured as research projects and should provide data on the extent to which compensatory activities in the early years affect later reading and general academic achievement.

One of the earliest programs of sensory-motor and perceptual education was developed by Maria Montessori in the first decade of the 20th century. A "prepared environment" replete with graded, auto-instructional materials and equipment was designed to help the child achieve a sense of himself, self-mastery and mastery of his environment through the successful execution and repetition of apparently simple tasks which are nevertheless linked to the cultural expectations the child faces in the context of his total development." (22 p. 73) The program stresses "liberty within limits," allowing each child the freedom to choose his activity, but requiring its execution in a structured framework. Because it was originally developed and found effective in the Casa dei Bambini in the slums of Rome, the Montessori method is worth revisiting for its potential value in the pre-school education of disadvantaged pupils. For further descriptive and critical material the reader is referred to the recently re-issued Montessori Method (19) with its introduction by James McV. Hunt.

A carefully developed experimental pre-school program intended specifically for disadvantaged children is presently functioning under the aegis of the Institute for Developmental Studies. On the basis of research into the specific cognitive lacks found in disadvantaged children, materials and procedures were graded according to three stages of learning development: 1) The sensory-motor level where, through direct contact with concrete materials and labeling procedures, the child develops gross perceptual discriminations; 2) The perceptual level at which fine discriminations are taught through contrasting stimuli (color, shape, size, sound, etc.) and labeling is further developed and 3) The ideational-representational level where stimuli are presented verbally with a minimum of concrete support. With the 4 year old groups the language work is focused on labeling, relating experiences, and on the use of books for stories, picture recognition, etc. Manipulative materials, visual symbolic materials and beginning instruction in the basic physical concepts are involved in developing non-linguistic skills. Intensive teacher preparation preceded the initiation of the programs and careful follow-up of "graduates" will provide data on the relation between the structure of pre-school experiences and grade-

Similar work, also under careful research conditions, is now in progress in some Israeli 4 and 5 year-old kindergartens. Preliminary to the program, the various cognitive abilities essential for academic mastery were identified, and pupils from several varying backgrounds were tested for their status on these abilities. As a result, special teaching procedures and materials were prepared for individual, small group and total class instruction. At the end of this year, the first group to have been through the two year program will finish first grade and their achievements along the various cognitive dimensions and in school subjects will be compared to a control group.

Many school districts are now embarking on pre-school programs. One well-defined program is in operation in Quincy, Illinois,(23), another,The Early Admissions Program, in Baltimore, Md.(30) In both instances, evaluation procedures form an integral part of the program. Too many other school systems are entering the field with little understanding of how such programs should differ from the "good nursery school" and what specific content and materials need to be added to the standard program. One of the stumbling blocks to the development of clearly defined and testable programs is the resistance of nursery school teachers to structured programs for young children and their oft expressed concern lest the introduction of formal activities "rob little children of their childhood." Perhaps a re-examination of Maria Montessori's concept of "liberty within limits" would help teachers understand the importance of a structured environment in enabling children to become autonomous and self-directing.

Whether compensatory programs can be effective at all, still needs documentation. And whether their effectiveness is limited to the pre-school years or whether similar activities at later ages could result in significant improvement is also not known. Although this path toward readying children for later school learning holds great promise, the promise can only be fulfilled where the programs fill in the known lacks in the early experiences of disadvantaged children.

Language Development

In one way or another, all of the procedures described above address themselves to the language development of the pupils, and with good reason. Adequate language

crucial to academic learning. That disadvantaged pupils at all ages and at all stages demonstrate deficiencies in this respect needs no further documentation. The research on this score is convincing and although various studies point to different deficiencies, all agree on the generally inadequate language development of disadvantaged youth, and imply varied remediation. (10)

At the pre-school level, great emphasis is placed on labeling and naming; on verbalizing relationships between objects, such as same or different; on descriptive specificity and appropriate verbal designations of position in space - such as above or below, on or under. Books are used extensively to teach children to attend to verbal material, recall the order of events, hear sounds of words and enjoy stories. Tape recordings of the childrens' speech patterns and of speech models are also used.

Many of these strategies are equally appropriate at the elementary and junior high school level and can be combined with reading instruction. Perhaps, if such approaches were used more extensively in the early grades, and formal reading instruction postponed, less time and money would have to be spent on remedial instruction.

Although language can develop only as children are given continued opportunity to speak, it is not enough to give them a chance to "show and tell", to role-play a variety of characters or to participate in group discussion. Such activities have long been practiced with little improvement in language. The pupils need direct instruction in language forms and their uses, intensive correction of their own speech patterns and a continuous emphasis on vocabulary building and the appropriate use of words. But how to provide the formal instruction without stifling the free expressive flow of the pupils' own language is a serious question. Teachers will have to move cautiously, and seek for a balance between opportunities for free oral expression and intensive efforts to correct and improve language production.

Language problems lie not only in the expressive but in the receptive domain. Pupils need help in hearing language as well as in speaking it. Until the pupil has learned to recognize the faults in his own speech patterns, his oral communication can hardly improve. The ability to comprehend spoken language is also crucial, in its own right as well as in preparing the pupil to understand written communication. Here the use of oral reports, story reading, listening to tapes of dramatic or [illegible]otic material can be useful. At lower levels, various kinds of listening games can be devised. At older levels, the combined use of sight and sound, as in following a taped story in a book, can help increase both listening and reading skills.

There are, as yet, few published materials in this area. Teachers have to devise their own ways of working on the children's language. To do this, speech patterns must be analysed, problems diagnosed, and procedures for attacking the difficulties carefully planned. Teachers will need the assistance of language and speech specialists in designing meaningful developmental and remedial language programs.

One additional note: at the senior high school level and at the college level it has been suggested that, for Negro students in particular, but for all who use dialects or have inappropriate modes of speech, English be taught as a foreign language through language laboratory techniques and other procedures useful in learning to speak a foreign tongue. (17)

Enhancing the Self-Concept

The self-concept, according to Harry Stack Sullivan, develops from the "reflected appraisals of significant others." How a child sees himself is an outgrowth of how other people see him, especially those people about whom he cares and who have meaning in his life. Among disadvantaged children, especially

Negroes, there is a greater degree of self-derogation, of seeing oneself as ugly, stupid, or inferior than is true for more affluent or even lower class white children. Part of these feelings of inferiority among Negroes is unrelated to actual achievement but reflects an "emotional accomodation to the demanding role in American culture that has been imposed upon his racial group by the dominant majority." (16p387) From his review of the evidence on the effects of desegregation, Kato concludes that moving into a school with white pupils does not automatically enhance the pupil's self-concept and may, where social acceptance is lacking, degrade it. It therefore becomes imperative for the school to tackle this problem consciously through planned teaching strategies.

In one neighborhood center intensive group work, accompanied by broadened social contacts and revised occupational frames of reference for 13 year old fatherless Negro boys resulted in significant improvement in self-esteem, level of aspiration and general behavior. (4)

In junior high school, role playing of job seeking situations, where children play the potential employer as well as employee, of fight situations, of response to insults and other such personal areas can be used to help the child ventilate his own frustrations, doubts and worries and to explore the meaning and appropriateness of his feelings about himself.

The success experiences discussed earlier also provide vehicles for enhancing one's self-image, although by school age achievement may no longer be a potent force in reconstructing negative attitudes toward oneself as a person. Perhaps the greatest hope lies in the expansion of broad-based schools, drawing from various ethnic, racial, and socio-economic groups and where the school climate is such that disadvantaged children gain acceptance among their more advantaged peers. To encourage the development of understanding and appreciation of different cultural groups, various human relations training techniques may prove useful. Acceptance may also be enhanced by providing opportunities for the

for the less verbal or academically able to assume positions of responsibility in the classroom or in the school, capitalizing, as far as possible on the individual pupil's special abilities. Because self-concepts are formed early and tend to be stable, significant changes in a persons view of himself may not be readily amenable to school efforts but such efforts must nevertheless be made. It would seem that improved academic functioning does not, of itself, produce positive changes in self-image since achievementvand self concept do not appear to have a direct causal relation one to the other. However, they are both essential components of the adequately functioning individual and the school needs to explore various channels through which youngsters from disadvantaged backgrounds and particularly Negro and other minority group members can recognize and appreciate themselves as worthy people. This area needs deeper exploration before techniques or materials of real merit can be developed.

Reading

The American school has set many goals for itself and has had others thrust upon it by outside pressures which, each in its own time, reflected the spirit of its era. But, from its inception, the school has gone about the task of inducting the child into his culture. And reading has been central to this enterprise. Whatever else the school may see as its ultimate goals, it must provide the learner with the skills by which he can cope effectively with the demands of modern civilization. The most important of these skills is reading. Although modern methods of auditory and visual communication provide additional channels for learning, the printed page remains the basic, most economical means for continued contact between the individual and his culture, past and present. Without adequate reading skills, the learner derives progressively less and less benefit from schooling. When he leaves school, usually as a drop-out, he finds himself suited for little else than some fast disappearing menial job or for some form of public assistance.

The teaching of reading is more of a problem in the English speaking countries than in almost any European country. The non-phonetic nature of English orthography presents the learner with untold complications of relating several phonemes to a single or combined letter symbol or several single or combined letter symbols to the same phoneme. Because of this inherent inconsistency as well as for other theoretical reasons, the teaching of reading began in the early decades of this century to shift from a sound to a sight approach. But whatever approach is used or whatever combination of approaches, bright, prepared and motivated children learn to read and to read well. Many of them come to school with rudimentary reading skills and move easily and rapidly through the prescribed sequence. But the disadvantaged child, too often, fails to learn by any of the methods effective for the majority of the population.

Many new approaches to the teaching of reading have recently been developed commercially and published materials are available. Each of the reading programs discussed below has some face validity for teaching disadvantaged children but how effective each one will prove to be and for which pupils remains to be discovered.

The Frostig Program (11)

The Frostig program is actually a pre-reading program which focuses attention on the development of visual perception. It could as well have been discussed under the heading of Compensating for Cognitive Deficiencies. But since it is intended as a first step in the teaching of reading and also as an approach to remedial reading, it has been included here. Five perceptual abilities are stressed: 1) Perception of Position in Space; 2) Perception of Spatial Relationships, 3) Perceptual Constancy, 4) Visual-Motor Coordination, and 5) Figure Ground Perception. For each area there is a varying number of work sheets through which the child exercises the various skills. In order to

focus the instruction specifically on each child's particular problems or learning needs, the Marianne Frostig Developmental Test of Visual Perception (10) was developed and is intended both as a diagnostic and as an assessment tool.

According to the authors, "the work sheets can be used to advantage with children of culturally deprived backgrounds, a group that frequently shows poor reading readiness and low achievement. In such cases, training with the work sheets should be continued into the second grade".

Training sessions can vary in length and frequency and should be determined on the basis of the diagnostic work-up. Although intended for kindergarten and the primary grades, the material can be introduced at any point at which a need for perceptual training is manifested.

Use of these materials with a small group of disadvantaged 2nd and 3rd graders last summer suggested that these children needed considerable experience with direct bodily movements before they could benefit from the work sheet approach. The work of the Dalcroze Eurythmics movement, popular during the 30's but still being used in some places today, may have special merit for children who are spacially disoriented.

The APC (33)

The Accelerated Progressive Choice Reading method is an attempt to deal with the reading problems inherent in the non-phonetic nature of the English language. The material is divided into three cycles: In Cycle I, the learner is restricted to phonetically consistent letters; in Cycle II he is restricted to phonetically consistent compounds or letter groups; in Cycle III he is exposed to varying sounds for the same letter and varying letters for the same sound. In each cycle there are five levels: a) Audial Meaning Level in which words ultimately to be read in a given segment are used in spoken form;

b) Discrimination Level where the child learns to discriminate the characteristic form features of the letters; c) Identification Level where he learns to give the appropriate sound for each new element; d) Compounding Level where he learns to blend sounds when confronted by letter compounds and e) Visual Meaning Level in which he demonstrates his ability to use audial and visual modes interchangeably and comes to discover meaning in some of the letter combinations which he sees (CMO, CCM, MCM)

In the initial phases, all the work is in capital letters and only later are lower case letters introduced. The material presents, in a graded series, a dovetailed pupil and teacher programmed text, and a considerable amount of guided self-teaching is made possible and vary[illegible] rates of pupil progress are easy to manage.

As is true for other programs, no data is available on the effectiveness of this approach for disadvantaged [illegible]pils. Its stress on the perceptual elements and its step-by-step approach suggest that it is worth trying.

The Structural Reading Series. (25)

Unlike the APC program, the Stern material begins with the spoken word rather than the single letter as the basis of sound analysis. From word analysis, where pupils learn to distinguish the component parts of words, the children move to the "sounding out of the corresponding printed word by learning to recognize visually the main part at a glance and then simply add the ending." (We Learn to Listen). At all times, the emphasis is on meaning. In a sense, this method combines both the phonic and the sight approach. It contains five books: one readiness book, two books for grade one and two for grade two. Each is accompanied by a teacher manual. The readers are, like the APC Series, workbooks in which the child actually does the required work. No text-book accompanies the series.

Before this program can be used with disadvantaged children, it would be necessary to discover to what extent the children are familiar with the pictured objects presented in the books since so much of the program depends upon associating letters with initial sounds and the words derive from pictures. Such things as fans, screens, masks and even flowers may be foreign to the children. In such a case, no association of picture, initial sound and letter could result. These materials are being tried in one of the reading programs by the Mobilization for Youth Project in New York City.

i.t.a. (7)

Both the Woolman (APC) and the Stern materials have been developed to ease the child's struggles with a non-phonetic language. How successful they will prove to be remains to be seen. But rather than find devious ways of accommodating to the irregularities of English orthography, the i.t.a. or Initial Teaching Alphabet (originally referred to as the Augmented Roman Alphabet) has taken the revolutionary step of developing a true phonetic alphabet of 43 lower case characters which, taken together represent all the phonemes of the language and each character represents only one phoneme. The characters have been skillfully designed so as to resemble as far as possible the standard English alphabet and twenty-four of them correspond exactly to the actual English letters. Most of the remaining nineteen are close approximations of the letter combinations they represent; q and x have been eliminated.

æ	b	c	a	ɛɛ	f		g	h	i	j	k	l		m	n	œ
ago	bed	cat	dog	key	feet	leg	hat	fly	fug	boy	letter	man	nest	over		
p	r	s	t	u-e	v	w	y	z	ɤ	ʍh	ʧh	ʨh				
pen	red	spoon	tree	use	voice	window	yes	zebra - daisy		when	chair	three				
ʤh	ʃh	ʒ	ŋ	ɑ	au	a , e	i	o	u	ω	ω					
the	shop	television	drink	father	ball	cup	egg	milk	box	up	book	spoon				
ɔu	ɔi															

this alphabet can be used with any initial teaching method and has also been tried with pupils in need of remedial work.

The alphabet was devised by Sir James Pitman and was initially tried under rigorous experimental conditions in several English schools, some in depressed areas or new housing developments to which former slum dwellers had been recently moved. Similar experimental efforts are now underway in Bethlehem, Pa. The evidence consistently indicates that more children learn to read successfully at earlier ages than is true with the traditional alphabet; and they have far greater reading vocabularies and somewhat better comprehension. What is especially encouraging is that the differences are most marked for low socio-economic groups, least marked for high SES children. (The latter learn to read regardless of method!)

When the program was first introduced the great anxiety was with regard to transfer. Would these children, even assuming that they learn to read in i.t.a. be able to read in traditional orthography? The answer appears to be yes! And one can see the transfer take place, in most instances, automatically. I saw one child who was considered ready to transfer read a full page in t.o. - his first exposure to traditional orthography in a school book - and at the end, having read it without error, exclaim, "But Miss Bennett, it's different."

Because it provides early and painless mastery of the skills, pupils in i.t.a. programs read more, enjoy the process of reading and show more extensive vocabularies and more adequate language usage than comparable children taught by the standard orthography. Some questions still remain regarding spelling, but even here, the latest evidence suggests that the i.t.a. group, having "transferred" do not differ from the control group on normal traditional spelling.

The i.t.a. approach may also be useful as a remedial tool. In the few situations where it has been tried with 5th and 6th grade pupils, the results

have been promising, indeed. In one school, in an old, dilapidated section of Oldham, England, 6th graders who had been almost illiterate were put into a special i.t.a. reading class. The progress was remarkable. But what was as gratifying as the improved reading performance was the changed attitude of the pupils. The new alphabet had given them a second chance to begin all over again and they were now finding success where, previously, they had known only failure.

The phonetic alphabet provides a set of easily used tools which enable early and relatively painless skill mastery. But whether the children become self-directed readers, with a love and appreciation of books, depends upon the attitudes of the teacher and the climate of the school. Along with symbol mastery there must be continued emphasis on comprehension through providing experiences which broaden the child's knowledge and extend his language.

The i.t.a. approach is perhaps the most promising in developing reading skills and creating successful readers in a disadvantaged population and can be tried in schools with a greater sense of security than some of the other plans because it has been and still is being carefully and rigorously evaluated.

Individual Instruction.

Recognition of the special needs of children from disadvantaged backgrounds has led to conceptions of teaching, to teaching strategies and to materials which differ substantially from those which had been found generally effective with middle class learners. However, there are two tacit assumptions in these approaches: 1) that all disadvantaged pupils need essentially the same educational approaches and 2) that such pupils will continue to be found in large numbers in relatively segregated classrooms and thus teachable as large groups.

This first assumption has as little validity for the disadvantaged as for any other group of pupils. There is hardly a classroom in existence where all pupils are at the same starting point or can proceed through a learning sequence at the same pace or in the same fashion. Nevertheless, most teachers assume otherwise and treat the whole class as if it represented one individual taken 30 times. In the primary level, teachers do divide the class into two or three teaching groups, but beyond the third grade even sub-grouping is rarely practiced. When the abilities become so obtrusively disparate that some of the pupils completely fail to learn, or create disciplinary problems in the classroom, teachers ask to have the range narrowed so that by teaching to the average they will not leave any pupils too far behind. With increased desegregation of schools, more and more classrooms which now appear to the teacher as relatively "homogeneous" in not with respect to actual achievement, at least with respect to behavior and appearance, will include some pupils with marked learning retardation and some with behavior problems to which teachers are unaccustomed. Narrowing the range will provide no solution. First of all the evidence does not support the contention that pupils learn better in narrower range classes. (21) But more importantly, narrowing the range will, in most instances, lead to segregated classes, thus defeating the very purposes for which desegregation took place.

The Improved Environment

A partial solution to this apparent dilemma might be found in reassessing the teaching function and viewing the teacher, at least in part, in the image of the Montessori directress who does no direct teaching but guides pupils in their use of self-teaching materials.

In a primary school in Leicester I saw a class of 47 sixth grade pupils in one room with one teacher where each child was working at his own level, in a subject of his choice either completely alone or with one or two others. In some

child was setting his own pace and working through each subject matter sequence at his own rate. In arithmetic the class ranged from early exploration of basic arithmetic concepts, using the Dienes self-teaching materials (6) to work on algebraic problems which a few boys were pursuing. Like the Montessori classroom at the pre-school level, this room also represented a "prepared environment." Various subject area series of graded exercises and materials were available and pupils collected their work in sequential order checking off each completed task (most of which were self-testing) so that the teacher had a record of where each child stood across the total curriculum.

But like the traditional Montessori classroom, this sixth grade room was almost devoid of organized conversation. The teacher did not lecture, but neither did the pupils engage in discussion, sharing ideas, comparing opinions or otherwise communicating their thoughts or their learnings to other members of the class. As a result, little work was done with oral language and pupils lacked the opportunity to learn the forms of oral expression, of listening to others or of sharing ideas. But both individual and small or large group work can be accommodated in the same classroom. The task is to create for each grade level and for each subject area a "prepared environment", with an abundance of graded self-teaching materials which cover a wide range both in skill and content level which pupils can use at their own pace. But especially in some aspects of the social studies, in the exploration of common personal problems or at other points where it appears appropriate, pupils should have experience with oral participation, with learning to listen to others and should feel free to express their own ideas or share their learnings with their classmates.

Programmed Instruction.

An increasing number of programmed materials (with or without benefit of computer) is becoming available, which cover many subjects. (12) As noted earlier, the small steps, the limited probability of error and the constant reinforcement inherent in programmed texts should, theoretically, make such material especially useful for pupils who work at a slow pace, need constant reassurance and many opportunities for success. However, it is possible that the intrinsic reinforcement derived from discovering that one's response is correct may not be sufficiently motivating to the disadvantaged learner. Perhaps more tangible rewards are necessary in the form of teacher praise or even some prize or privilege which would accompany a short task well done. From one study of the use of programmed materials with severely retarded readers, (15) the researchers concluded that special materials may be needed for particular groups and these will have to be tried and modified to fit specific learners. Furthermore, the balance between programmed text and teacher involvement needs particular study in relation to disadvantaged learners.

However, even if existing programs are found inadequate for the more disadvantaged children, they may be useful with some of the more prepared and faster learners, thus leaving the teacher free to work individually or in small groups with those for whom the programs are inappropriate or with those who are not yet able to handle programmed material independently.

Other Self-Instructional Materials.

A great many new self-teaching materials have recently appeared on the market. Some of them like the SRA reading laboratory (24), or the Dienes mathematics materials (6) have been developed as educational materials and tested in various schools. Others, are essentially games but cover a wide variety of content of a factual and skill nature and lend themselves to use by one or several children at

and tapes. At the higher levels, language laboratory equipment with a variety of tapes provides opportunities for independent learning not only of foreign languages but also of other content which is best transmitted through oral material. The recent development of cartridge loaded 8mm loop-film projectors and a growing library of short films provides excellent self-teaching material from simple arithmetic facts up, should anyone be interested, "Chinese calligraphy."* (9) Science materials for individual use can also be found and can supplement class demonstrations and organized laboratory periods.

As with programmed instruction, some of the existing auto-instructional materials may be more appropriate for the more able than for the less able or motivated learners. However, a class which is organized around self-instruction for basic drill and fact learning can leave the teacher time to work closely with pupils who need special help. But, in addition, some of the materials, with slight modifications in pacing or directions, can also be made to fit the learning levels of some of the disadvantaged pupils.

With few exceptions, what is available today has not been tested specifically on disadvantaged groups. But many of the new materials and new techniques merit careful try-out in classrooms to assess their power to motivate and to teach.

Tutoring and Homework-Help.

Several techniques which have shown promises in raising the academic level of disadvantaged pupils can be brought together under the heading of one-to-one pupil-teacher efforts. Several projects have found that in the course of a six week summer reading clinic children have gained a year or more in reading. Individual sessions with specialized remedial reading teachers have also proven useful for some children. More recently, provisions have been made to help pupils with homework assignments. This may be done by trained teachers who work with

* For a listing of presently available cartridges see Technicolor Corporation, Source Directory Educational Single-Concept Films available in Magi-Cartridges,

individuals or small groups after school or by high school or college students as in the Mobilization for Youth project in New York City. The latter has shown positive results in pupil achievement and, at the same time, has provided more adult high school students from low income homes with a source of funds and of social approbation.

There is no limit to the ingenuity which can be applied to creating an optimum "prepared environment" in which pupils at different stages of readiness and with greatly varying learning paces and styles can flourish. The first prerequisite for such a creation is a recognition on the part of the school and the teacher that it is not only desirable, but necessary and that it can be done. A second prerequisite is to provide teachers with time and access to materials so that they can "prepare" their classrooms for self-teaching. When these conditions have been met, teachers will find a wealth of materials, equipment and techniques already on the market and will be able to devise others to fit their particular pupils.

Summary

This paper has discussed materials and teaching methods which might appropriately be derived from some of the more fruitful theoretical propositions relating to learning deficits in disadvantaged children and youth. It has also discussed some existing materials in relation to theoretical formulations. In the absence of experimental evidence regarding the true effectiveness of many of the procedures, goodness of fit with a theory which is derived from social-psychological research has been suggested as a basis for selection.

In addition to a discussion of procedures in relation to "The Cultural Mainstream", "Motivational Approaches", "Compensating for Cognitive Deficit", "Language Development", and "Self-Concept", the paper also analyzed some

...tative reading programs and procedures for individualized instruction.

Both from the psychological and the educational evidence, several proposed characteristic approaches which have been relatively successful with disadvantaged pupils. Perhaps some of them also characterize the good learning situation for all pupils.

1. Each pupil's standing in each learning area has to be ascertained. Teaching must begin where the pupil is, regardless of grade level - age differential and materials must be appropriate to his present level. No assumptions can be made about the child's prior knowledge derived from home or neighborhood experiences.
2. Each pupil merits respect as a person, appreciation of his efforts and understanding of his problems. The teacher must not show by word, look, or gesture that the child's inability to perform adequately or his lack of comprehension of even the most rudimentary concepts is shocking or disturbing.
3. All procedures need to be paced in accordance with the pupils speed of learning. No assumptions should be made that a child has grasped what has been taught until he is able to demonstrate his grasp over and over again in a variety of contexts.
4. The learning situation needs to have a high degree of structure and consistency so that the child knows what is expected of him at all times and is neither confused nor tempted to test the limits through inappropriate behavior.
5. The learning situation should provide a maximum of positive reinforcement and a minimum of negative reinforcement. Self teaching materials as well as the teacher should confront the learner with as few tasks as possible in which there is a high probability of error.

6. The [illegible] room as well as afterschool learning activities should provide as much one-to-one teacher-pupil learning contact as possible.

7. Materials should be related to the world of the learner but not limited to his immediate environment. Stories about cowboys and rockets may prove more exciting and thus a better learning medium than those about the local firehouse or the sanitation truck.

8. One additional proposition needs to be stated, derived not from evidence but from the basic values underlying education in a democracy: although the school must start with the learner where he is, its responsibility is to enable him to move as far as he can go which is often much further than he himself regards as his limits.

Too little is known today as to the specific approaches, strategies of materials through which the intent of the general propositions can be most appropriately translated into school and classroom practice. Materials available today are probably only the first sprinkles of what will shortly become a deluge. Every publishing company will jump on the band wagon and produce a "new" and "better" set of readers, arithmetic books, social studies texts or even materials through which to enhance self-concept. Every equipment company will come out with "new" and "better" gadgets. The school will have to show great resistance to the salesmen and exercise great care in selecting among their wares. Ideally, only those materials whose short and longer range effects have been studied and found effective should be acquired. But realistically, schools will choose materials which look promising but for which there is little or no evaluation. Therefore, the schools themselves should try out new approaches under true experimental conditions and report results. In this way we could build up a bank of knowledge from which all can borrow and to which all can contribute. If we are to move the education of disadvantaged pupils to higher levels of achievement, to motivate

and stimulate them to learn and turn learning into an exciting and successful experience for large numbers, we must learn what works, for whom and under what conditions. Without this knowledge we will be floundering, jumping from one approach to another, proliferating, as we are now doing, programs and services about whose efficiency and effectiveness we know little.

The school alone will never solve the deep and hurtful problems which create disadvantaged people and the impoverished environments from which so many of our children come. But the school can break into the vicious cycle of poverty - illiteracy - greater poverty by assessing more carefully just what it can do and then mobilize its resources to do it. Ours is an affluent land with much "room at the top." Our task is to provide those now at the bottom with the learning skills through which they'll have the option to move to the top if they wish.

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